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BOOKS RECEIVED.

HISTORY OF THE VIRGINIA DEBT CONTROVERSY.—The Negro's Vicious Influence in Politics. By WILLIAM L. ROYALL, of the Richmond, Va., and New York City Bars. Richmond, Va. Geo. M. West, Publisher. 1897.

This brochure of something over a hundred pages, tells in condensed but lucid form, the story of Virginia's great struggle over the settlement of her public debt. Mr. Royall's position as counsel for the bondholders throughout that memorable struggle kept him in the forefront of the prolonged and multiform litigation to which it gave rise, and he is probably more familiar with the legal and political phases of the controversy than any half-dozen men in the Commonwealth.

To every lover of the old mother the story is a sad one, and, save for the sake of historical truth, better that it were left untold. There is much in the volume to furnish food for the reflections of statesmen everywhere, and the constitutional lawyer will find it brimful of interest.

In his closing paragraphs, Mr. Royall has the following to say:

"The State of Virginia was the battle-field of the war, and her people are very far from having recovered yet from its ravages. The great body of the people are very poor, and they feel the public debt as a heavy burden upon them. In the day of her prosperity and power she ceded a royal domain to her sister States comprising with her the Union, the Northwestern territory. States teeming with millions of people, possessing thousands of millions worth of property, have been formed out of what she cheerfully gave to the common country. In making this cession, she stipulated for but few things, but one was, 'that the necessary and reasonable expenses incurred by this State in subduing any British posts, or maintaining forts or garrisons within and for the defense, or in acquiring any part of the territory so ceded or relinquished, shall be fully reimbursed by the United States.'

"The United States Government accepted her grant upon the express understanding that it would repay her these expenses, which it has never done. With their accumulated interest these expenses would be a very large sum now. It would be a graceful, a generous and a just act for the Government of the United States to come now to the aid of the poor old impoverished Commonwealth, and help her out of her trouble by assuming a part of her debt, and relieving her of the burden of that part."